

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 COME-00

EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 /069 W
----- 014716

R 260935Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6076

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0273

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION CINCLANT INFO CINCLANTFLT, COMNAVAIRLANT,
NAVSTA KEFLAVIK, AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK FROM COMICEDEFOR 242215Z
FEB 76 REPEATED TO YOU FOR INFO:

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI

SUBJECT: BASE BLOCKADE

QUOTE

SITREP/002/242215Z FEB 76

A. COMICEDEFOR 232245Z FEB 76

1. (U) A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE U.S./ICELANDIC DEFENSE COUNCIL WAS CONVENED ON 24 FEB 76, TO DISCUSS THE "STRIKE ACTION" BY THE KEFLAVIK LABORER'S AND SEAMAN'S UNION (REPORTED REF A) DIRECTED AT THE NAVSTA KEFLAVIK NAVY EXCHANGE SERVICE STATION. AT THIS MEETING, A FORMAL REQUEST WAS MADE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ICELAND TO TAKE NECESSARY ACTION TO REMOVE THE STRIKERS FROM THE NX SERVICE STATION.
 2. (C) THE ACTING ICELANDIC CHAIRMAN (MR. HALLGRIMUR DALBERG) STATED THAT IT WAS THE POLICY OF HIS GOVERNMENT NOT TO USE ICELANDIC POLICE IN A STRIKE ACTION UNLESS LIFE AND PROPERTY WERE ACTUALLY ENDANGERED. HE READILY ADMITTED THAT THE ACTION OF THESE STRIKERS WAS ILLEGAL AND CONTRARY TO THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, HE INDICATED THAT ILLEGAL ACTIONS ARE OFTEN TAKEN DURING STRIKES, AND THAT THE GOI CONSIDERS IT LESS DANGEROUS
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TO ALLOW THESE ILLIGAL ACTIVITIES TO CONTINUE THAN TO USE THE POLICE

FORCE TO STOP THEM. HE INFERRED THAT IN THE CASE OF THE DEFENSE FORCE, IF THE POLICE WERE TO REMOVE THE STRIKERS THERE WERE MANY MILITANT OPPONENTS OF THE DEFENSE FORCE WHO WOULD PROBABLY JOIN THE UNION STRIKERS IN A MASS DEMONSTRATION. MR. DALBERG

FUTHER POINTED OUT THAT IN ALL PAST LABOR SETTLEMENTS IN ICELAND IT IS FIRST AGREED THAT THE UNIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS WILL BE IMMUNE FROM STATE PROSECUTION FOR ALL ILLEGAL ACTS COMMITTED DURING THE STRIKE.

3. (U) THE ICELANDIC CHAIRMAN REPEATED THE ALLEGATION THAT SOME DEFENSE FORCE MEMBERS WERE TRANSFERRING GASOLINE FROM THEIR PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES (JO LICENSE PLATES) TO ICELANDIC VEHICLES IN THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES. WHEN QUESTIONED ON THIS POINT, THE ICELANDIC CHAIRMAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT NO EVIDENCE EXISTS AND NOT ONE JO LICENSE NUMBER COULD BE CITED TO SUPPORT THE ALLEGATION.

4. (C) WHEN INQUIRIES WERE MADE AS TO WHAT ACTION THE GOVERNMENT OF ICELAND WOULD TAKE IF STRIKE ACTIONS WERE DIRECTED AT THE COMMISSARY OR NAVY EXCHANGE, THE ICELANDIC CHAIRMAN STATED SIMPLY THAT THIS WOULD NOT OCCUR AND THAT THE GASOLINE ISSUE WAS OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE TO THE UNION. CONTRARY TO PRIOR INFORMATION, IT NOW APPEARS THAT THE ACTION OF THE STRIKERS AT THE NX SERVICE STATION HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE UNION LEADERSHIP FROM ITS INCEPTION.

5. (C) FOLLOWING THE MEETING IT WAS INFERRED (BUT NOT ACTUALLY STATED) THAT A POSSIBILITY EXISTED THAT CIDF COULD BE CALLED UPON TO EXERCISE HIS LAWFUL RIGHT UNDER THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT TO REMOVE THE PICKETS FROM THE AGREED AREA. MR. HOSKULDUR OLAFSSON, ICELANDIC MEMBER OF THE DEFENSE COUNCIL, INFERRED (BUT DID NOT STATE DIRECTLY) THAT THIS ENTIRE MATTER WAS A POLITICAL ONE, AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD BE FORCED TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION THROUGH U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT CHANNELS TO PREVENT ANY REACTION BY THE DEFENSE FORCE.

6. (C) IT APPEARS THAT THE ONLY RESTRAINTS ON STRIKERS IN ICELAND ARE SELF IMPOSED. IT IS EVIDENT THAT IN A GENERAL STRIKE, THE ACTIONS OF UNION MEMBERS, LEGAL OR ILLEGAL, WILL NOT BE INTERFERED WITH BY ICELANDIC AUTHORITIES UNLESS THERE IS A CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TO LIFE OR PROPERTY. IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT THE LEGAL RIGHTS GUARANTEED UNDER THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT WILL BE IGNORED IF GOI ACTION WOULD INTERFERE WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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STRIKERS.

7. (C) CONDITIONS AT THE NX SERVICE STATION REMAIN UNCHANGED. HOWEVER, THE LACK OF GASOLINE FOR PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES IS BEGINNING TO CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THE APPROXIMATELY 375 DEFENSE FORCE FAMILIES WHO LIVE OFF BASE. ON BASE BUS TRANSPORTATION HAS BEEN INCREASED TO MAXIMUM EXTENT FEASIBLE.

UNQUOTE.

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